

**Dear Ms. C-R**

A Letter to Your Humanities Teacher Describing  
Where You're at with Your First Independent Reading Assignment

Directions:

Compose a letter to Ms. C-R in which you describe the autobiography or memoir you currently are reading for your first Book Talk (scheduled for October 18th). Your letter should answer the following questions:

1. *What is the title of the autobiography or memoir you are reading (or have read)?*
2. *What is the name of the author?*
3. *How many pages have you have read as of the writing of the letter?*
4. *How many total pages does the book contain?*
5. *How do you intend to organize your reading so that you will finish it by Tuesday, October 11th?*
6. *What are your overall impressions of the book thus far?*
7. *What is your favorite part thus far?*
8. *What part or parts of the book have been difficult for you or have not kept your attention as much as you would have liked?*
9. *What is at least one thing that has surprised you about the book?*

If you have already finished your autobiography or memoir, some of the above questions will not apply such as how you intend to finish it by the October 11th deadline. You should still comment on all the other questions. Then, answer questions 1-4 and question 6 for whatever book you are currently reading as part of your nightly Independent Reading homework.

Keep in mind that the information should be presented in letter form which means that there should be a greeting (salutation) and a closing (see the example on the back). Because it is a letter, it can have some informal elements, but you should keep in mind that it is a letter written to your teacher and therefore should be thoughtful, informative, and neatly presented. It can be typed or hand-written. The letter is a perfect way for you to make sure you are on track with your Independent Reading assignment. It is due at the beginning of the period on \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Esteemed Teacher,

It is my great pleasure to share with you the progress I have made thus far in my Independent Reading. I relish the chance to reflect on all that I have read and how I intend to finish the book by the October 11th deadline. Thank you, Esteemed Teacher, for providing me with this opportunity.

The book I am currently reading is called *The Lacuna*. It is written by one of my favorite authors, Barbara Kingsolver. Currently I am on page 216 which is slightly shy of the half-way point. The book contains 507 pages. My hope is to read approximately 60 pages each night between now and the upcoming deadline. Wish me luck!

Overall, I am enjoying this book a great deal. Kingsolver is a master of descriptive language so that no matter what she writes, it sounds like poetry which is something I really admire. I have learned a lot about the Mexican artists Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo and their involvement with Lev Trotsky, a person of great importance during the Russian Revolution. My favorite parts, however, have been when the narrator recalls his experiences with his free-spirited mother and when he describes the meals he is preparing for Rivera, Kahlo and Trotsky. The food sounds amazing!

If I had to choose a part of the book that I have found difficult, it would be keeping track of some of the political events of the time. Kingsolver does extensive research so that her fictional works contain oodles of real-life details. At times, these details can be distracting from the characters and her wonderfully vivid descriptive language. I also was disappointed that the narrator's mother was killed in a car accident fairly early in the book. She was such a refreshing character, even though she seemed a bit crazy. I guess that is what was most surprising for me--how much I grew to like the mother despite the fact that she has no qualms about pursuing men who were already married and, at times, chose to abandon her son so that she could be with these men.

I look forward to continuing with my reading!

Your Favorite Bookworm,  
Ima Student